

Dear Member

It is almost time for the national convention, an event with special meaning for me this year. It will mark my retirement after eight years on the national board, the last four as president. It has been a rewarding experience and one in which I have grown as an individual.

I have learned there are similarities of experience shared by local and state League presidents and the national president, including the fact that as League presidents we find ourselves in the middle of the action and in a position to get an overall picture of the League.



Another similarity is that we take the bows for all that you—the members—do. Because of your high reputation, we are asked to be involved in a variety of issues, to support or oppose a multiplicity of causes and to provide information on every conceivable subject. Increasingly we are also asked to be members of commissions, organizations, boards and committees.

As many of you know, I served as a member of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. I am also serving on the board of UNA-USA as a member of its Policy Panel on Atlantic Relationships, Eastern Europe and the United Nations. (Theodore Sorenson is chairman of the panel.)

In both these instances I felt, and the board agreed, League experience would be useful to the particular group and that my experience with the group would be useful to the League. But, as every local League board member realizes, the decision on whether or not to participate is hard to make.

Quite a different experience for the national president—at least for this westerner—has been my need to commute 3,000 miles to the office. Visits to Washington on an every-other-week basis just weren't possible; I found it best to travel East less often and to stay longer.

Sometimes the press of League duties has been such that I stayed longer than originally planned. The other

day I added up the time I spent in Washington in 1967, discovering it was a total of 124 days.

I also found that an additional 44 days had been spent away from home, making League speeches and attending to other League business. A prime advantage of the coast-to-coast trek is the opportunity to visit Leagues on the way to and from Washington, D.C. and Spokane! In my four years in office, I have gone back and forth via Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York, Maryland, Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Texas, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Colorado, Montana, Idaho, California and Oregon.

(Two very special trips took me to Hawaii and Alaska for their first state League conventions.)

And, of course, League business is attended to at home as well as at the office. When I am in Spokane, there is the handling of daily mail which includes "specials" on Sunday. The telephone bill soars, I regret to say.

Probably my most significant experience has been to see the League as a whole and to observe its maturity and growing perception. It's been my great pleasure to meet many of you personally, to come to know you through correspondence.

I detect a realization on your part that we are living in a time when getting information is not the main problem. The information is there. It is putting information to social and political use that concerns us. You are doing this with effectiveness and skill. I am proud of you and proud to have served as your president.

Julia D. Stuart
President

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President's request, the Trade Information Committee of the Special Representative for Trade Negotiations begins hearings March 25, 1968, to give all interested sectors of the economy — business, labor, agriculture and consumer organizations—the opportunity to contribute to shaping U.S. trade policy. (The League will testify.) Topics include:

The U.S. competitive position in world trade; tariff and nontariff impediments to trade; impact of trade on employment; special problems of agricultural trade; regional blocs and most-favored-nation poli-

cy; tariff preferences in addition to other aspects of trade policies toward developing countries.

The technicalities of trade can be left to the specialists, but the politics of trade cannot. What the U.S. citizen thinks about trade is important. If Congress hears only from protectionists, it is not likely to resist the strong push to establish import quotas nor to enact a new trade expansion act.

In which direction should United States trade policy move? Toward resurgent protectionism? Or continued economic expansion? □

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